

[16 cont.]

*756 over, the young shaman [17] was secluded for two months in her home. She dedicated this period to practicing chewing tobacco, and the act of invoking the spirits, the way of curing the sick, bringing rainfall, "shamanizing," animals, keeping penitence away, etc. The maraca and the crown (kiara, in Guajiro) were made by her during this seclusion, although they could have been bought or ordered to be made by others. At the end of this two months' seclusion, it was essential, in order to terminate the young shaman's cycle of initiation into shamanism, to prepare 76 ten containers of corn chicha and to invite many Indians from different sections to be present at the true graduation of the initiate. That night, while the others danced and drank, the young shaman remained practicing her arts. It is common on these occasions for the spirit to approach the aspiring shaman and say, for example: "Go look for an animal of such-and-such characteristics (it describes the desired animal minutely in all its details) and kill it. If you disobey me you will faint, have an attack, and you will never become a shaman." The young initiate then passes on the order to her relatives, who must hasten to look for the animal described by the spirit and sacrifice it. When the celebration has ended, the spirit returns to tell the young girl: "Hang up ten necklaces in your room so that I may come down and help you." (These necklaces must be made of gold beads). The aspiring shaman acquires these necklaces with the help of her relatives and friends, even on loan, and hangs 79 them in her room so that she can "shamanize." The spirit, grateful for her ready obedience and for the offering, approaches her once again and says: "Now you will make a truly good 83 shaman." And it warns her: "Now you may not sleep (cohabir) with your husband."

*756 Exercising the profession. When all these rites and ceremonies preparatory to entering the way of life of the shaman have 78 been complied with, the person chosen, as his protector spirit affirms, may then dedicate himself to that calling. The spirit itself has conferred such power. Better still, it has descended into the novice; it has entered his body to accompany him in every professional act, to communicate the arts indispensable or

[12 cont.]

777 The previous statement is borne out to such a point that
789 even in native communities that are quite homogeneous, anthropologically speaking, as in La Guajira, it is difficult to learn which beliefs, which practices of magic or of sorcery, are autochthonous and which are acculturations due to contact with the neighboring mestizos who, given the circumstances we have noted of being in the greater part mestizo, have a considerable collection of this type of beliefs and practices inherited largely from their Negro ancestors.

As it is totally impossible for us to make a list of the origin of all and each one of the autochthonous Guajiro beliefs, we shall have to confine ourselves to showing the similarities which they have in the whole of Colombian folklore. It is clear that this similarity will not always indicate acculturation, but only similarity due to the influence of other native groups that have disappeared but who once lived in Colombian territory, or exact beliefs which reached there from other continents and which can only be explained by the general evolutionary process of human mentality.

779 Characteristics of charms. 1. Some charms can be lost by
• [77] their owner to another person, if both the owner and [78] the
[79] borrower are of the same sex and if the charm is to be used by
the borrower so that he may benefit by its virtues.

[26] 2. To make use of them, the individual during the period
of action must submit himself to a special, very strict diet.
The breaking of any one of the norms will cancel the effect and
bring about serious prejudice to health, if not results contrary to
what he had looked for and expected. The way to carry out this
diet will be found described in the following section, "Application
and Effects."

3. It is sufficient for a stranger to look at the magic object
belonging to someone else for all its magic power to be trans-
ferred to him. For this reason it is an indispensable requisite to
keep it safely from other people's sight and always to be wary of
this type of violation.

438 4. It is very difficult to obtain a true charm because while
789 those who sell these are old women very practiced in this art,
675 many unscrupulous women often devote themselves to the trade

[30 cont.]

in charms, which usually have no magic value and are a commonplace fraud. These women are accustomed to putting in a small wool bag something that has the appearance of a charm and selling it as the legitimate article.

1. A love charm is worth about 100 Colombian pesos, and just the loan of it for a few days to a friend for him to get the desired results is paid for. Such a temporary loan is worth 100 Colombian pesos.

2. Besides the love charms which are strictly Guajiro, there are others that the so-called "Gorila" women sell. There are many of these women in Maricao and Zulia. Unfortunately, we could not obtain any special data about these makers of magic charms, of whom there are many on the eastern border of La Guajira.

3. The charms serve equally for either sex; what varies is in general terms the effects of the charms.

4. Some personal objects, such as hair, nails, etc., may form the basis of a love charm of great magic potential. This potential is above all due to the possession of a part of the personality of the person whom one wishes to harm.

5. Different love charms can be mixed together.

10. Charms may be acquired among civilizados. This kind of magic material is carefully kept in glass containers made especially for this purpose. [34]

Love charms. The Guajiro Indian, man or woman, knows and uses different charms to attract or repel love. They have them of different classes as regards form, preparation, and raw material. Some of them are the following:

a) One has the shape and general appearance of the excrement of the machero, (a species of lizard). It has been stated that one of the magic objects used by the shaman is a small wool bag containing a paste prepared by a herbalist that is in the shape of goat excrement and is used to attract the spirit.

b) Another, which is kept inside a small glass receptacle, looks like a stone and is accompanied by some small pieces of coral.

c) Another is made in the following way: The root of a herb, very abundant on Iroquo Hill, is ground and [the paste]

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whom to exercise his begging propensities. To mention the dead before the relations is a dreadful offence, often punished by death; for if it happens in the dead person's rancho, with nephew or uncle present, they will assuredly kill the offender on the spot if possible. If not on the spur of the moment, it resolves itself into a heavy fine, usually two or more oxen. Even if none of the dead person's relations are present, any friend can carry the news to the relations, and compensation is at once required. When not given it is forcibly taken, probably resented, and the two castes are at war. It is not wise to mention names of any sort in the Goajira in mixed company.

Another peculiar case: if a child dies in the custody of the mother or father, and they are living separate at the time of its death, then tear-money has to be paid by the one, under whose care the child died, to the other. This is "Taguira suchirua tachón," "My tears on account of my child." To demand payment for debts, *achekaka*, is one thing, and to demand compensation, *manga*, is another. They are generally pretty punctual in paying debts; should the debtor die, the creditor is secure, for the relations will suffer anything rather than allow the name of their dead to be abused. The following case of murder I witnessed in Ataipe. Some Pushaiinas drinking, one got on to a strange horse, and was ordered off by the owner, on not complying he was shot dead. Both parties being poor and near relations, it was arranged as follows: First payment, eight sheep, two oxen, one horse, two necklaces of cornelian beads, two sirapos of black beads (about 16 lbs.). Six months afterwards, second payment, similar to first. A few months after a third payment is asked, but is more an extra than anything else. After second payment all animosity ceases, and the two families can look again at each other on meeting. Should an Indian in attempting to kill another be wounded or killed, his family demand the same as though no attempt were made.

Among domestic customs, the one that calls most attention is shutting up their young girls on arriving at womanhood. The custom is religiously carried out throughout the country. Each girl is enclosed in a separate little hut by herself. She is stripped of all her ornaments, even to her beads and sirapo, and all her clothing with the exception of the long loose cotton gown, nor is she allowed to cut her hair. For the first couple of days, drinking water is denied her, the only food being *laguape*, a composition of medicinal herbs. According to birth, a rigorous diet is observed the first month, no meat being allowed. She can be freely mentioned and is merely alluded to by her relations as "sartise sern paura," "she is shut up in her house." The term of retirement varies according to the wealth and rank of her family. Poor people cannot afford to keep girls idle more than a couple of weeks or a month; whereas the rich enclose them for one, two, or even four years. It is while in this state that she learns all women's requirements—